

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been amended to further recite that the grommet is tubular and is deformable elastically and formed of a “compressible” material. Basis for this is found in the description of paragraphs [0050] and [0052] that the streaks 21 “are deformed elastically to contract by being pressed with the peripheral wall 11,” and that the peripheral wall 11 “compresses the convexed streaks.” Claim 1 is further amended to recite that the convexities are compressed in the radial directions of the grommet and elastically contact the socket or the projection when the convexities are pressed to an inner peripheral surface of the socket and an outer peripheral surface of the projection. Basis for this is evident from the figures. New Claim 9 further recites that the grommet is made of rubber (see paragraph [0044]).

Since the convexities 21 of the grommet 2 are compressed by the wall 11 of the socket 10 to retain the projection 3, the substantially triangular shape of the convexities assures a progressively increasing reaction force acting on the projection as the convexities are compressed.

Claims 1-3 and 5-8 have again been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Ito. In response to the arguments presented in the prior response, the Examiner has taken the position that polyacetal is elastically deformable, and that substantially triangular convexities are disclosed in Ito by the ends 17a of the arms 15a and the notches 14a shown in Figs. 8-10.

However this rejection is believed to be overcome by the present recitation that the convexities are provided in an elastically deformable and *compressible* grommet. There is no evidence that polyacetal is a compressible material or that the socket part 10 of Ito is compressible. Moreover, while Ito does not restrict the material of the socket part to polyacetal (“a socket part of a material such as polyacetal”), the phrase “such as polyacetal”

in the description of Ito requires that any alternative material must have characteristics similar to polyacetal and would not be compressible.

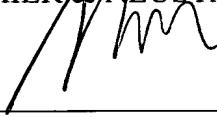
As already explained, the substantially triangular convexities in a compressible grommet are advantageous because they can be compressively deformed in a progressive manner by the wall 11 of the socket 10 to retain the projection 3. Since a compressible material is not taught in Ito, the amended claims define over this reference.

The rubber material of Claim 9 is also not taught by Ito.

Applicants therefore believe that the present application is in a condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early Notice of Allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

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